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HISTORICAL DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED AT THE

WHITESTOWN

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION,

JUNE 5, 1884.



— BY —

CHARLES TRACY.

UTICA, N. Y.

ELLIS H. ROBERTS & CO., BOOK AND JOB PRINTERS, 60 GENESSEE ST.

1885.

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HISTORICAL ADDRESS.

BY CHARLES TRACY.

A hundred years! How such a period marks the earth and its people with changes. It sweeps away three generations, and hardly does one man who breathed at the beginning of the grand cycle live five score years and watch its ending.

On a bright day in June, 1784, Hugh White, ascending the Mohawk river in a boat, reached the mouth of the Sadaquda Creek and there landed, at the spot since known as the Point. With some of his sturdy sons he stepped into the vast forest stretching north, west and south to the bounds of the State of New York, unbroken by any civilized settlement, without a natural prairie, and hardly opened to the sun except by a few scattered patches of Indian clearings. But they came to stay, and did stay. The fourth, fifth and sixth generations of his line witness to-day the centennial of that landing and the due honors rendered to those whose dust rests in peace in the fair land they won and reclaimed and beautified.

This hundred of years includes three-eighths of the whole period from the first landing of English emigrants on the American coast down to the present day.

The bold settlement of Manhattan Island by the Hollanders, and the establishment of their colonies along the Hudson and a part of the Mohawk, attracted emigrants from their own country and from Germany, before the British succeeded to the government; but after the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam had become the English province of New York, the difference of language hindered the infusion of British emigrants among the people. At the breaking out of the revolution the Hollanders in the valley of the Mohawk extended not many miles above Schenectady, from whence up to German Flats and Frankfort there were only Germans speaking their native tongue. The two peoples in the valley were similar in character and habits, and were in mutual friendship, but their dialects differed, and were distinguished as low Dutch and high Dutch. They held a region of remarkable fertility and beauty on both sides of the river, and there they cut down the woods, made roads and bridges, built houses and

churches, and cultivated their fruitful fields; and in the winter, when sleighing came, they "rode" their wheat to the town on the Hudson, now the city of Albany. They were in comfort, and were contented.

But the great struggle of the Revolutionary war, and its wonderful success, aroused a spirit of enterprise throughout the union, and as soon as peace was proclaimed thousands of New Englanders were ready to go beyond the existing Mohawk paradise, and attack the primeval forest, which, as they had heard, covered a broad area of rich soil. Hugh White was the man fitted by nature and chosen by providence to take the lead in this great enterprise. He was a substantial farmer of Middletown, Connecticut, fifty-one years old, with good habits, perfect integrity and ample vigor, promptitude, courage and mental force.

Things were prepared for his hands. One Hugh Wallace had held a tract of 6,000 acres by grant from the British provincial government, sometimes known as Wallace's patent. It lay in this valley, extending from the mouth of the Sadaqueda, at the Point, along up the Mohawk river and back from it on each side, including a remarkable combination of interval with higher level plains and gently rising hills. The Indian title to this land had been lawfully acquired by purchase under the sanction of the provincial government, according to the just and honest course of dealing with the Indians which always prevailed from the days of the first Dutch emigration. Wallace was a merchant in the city of New York, and a member of the British governor's council. The Americans once "apprehended" him; but after holding him prisoner in Connecticut for some time Governor Turnbull released him, and he returned to New York and resumed his seat in the council. His being a clear case of treason, the New York State Legislature, in the midst of the war, on the 22d day of October, 1779, passed a special act in which his name was included with some other like offenders. It opens thus: "Whereas, during the present unjust and cruel war, waged by the King of Great Britain, against this State, and the other United States of America, divers persons holding or claiming property within this State, have voluntarily been adherent to the said King, his fleets and armies, enemies to this State and the said other United States, with intent to subvert the government and liberties of this State and the said other United States, and to bring the same in subjection, to the crown of Great Britain; and whereas the public justice and safety of this State absolutely require, that the most

notorious offenders should be immediately hereby convicted and attained of the offense aforesaid, in order to work a forfeiture of their respective estates, and vest the same in the people of this State." It then proceeds to enact that certain persons named, among them being this Hugh Wallace, "be, and each of them are hereby severally declared to be, *ipso facto*, convicted and attained of the offense aforesaid; and that all and singular the estate, both real and personal, held or claimed by them, the said persons severally and respectively, whether in possession, reversion or remainder, within this State, on the day of the passing of this act, shall be, and hereby is declared to be, forfeited to and invested in the people of this State." It further enacted that all said persons be forever banished from this State, and that if any one of them should ever be found in this State "he should suffer death without benefit of clergy."

Thus Wallace's patent became the property of the State of New York by the best title known to the law.

Shortly afterwards, in the same year, the State, by its Commissioners of Forfeitures, sold this tract of land to Zephaniah Platt, Ezra L'Hommiedien, Melanethon Smith and Hugh White jointly, and the property became better known as Sadaqueda Patent, thus taking the name of the beautiful stream already mentioned.

The Indian name of this creek signifies "the stream of smooth pebbles," and the savages pronounced it Saghdagnaite. The French, who first wrote it, in their usual way shortened the name into Sauquoite, and pronounced it Sow-quait. The English afterwards wrote it and pronounced it Sadaqueda, and so it appears in maps and deeds through a long period. More recently the custom has been to use the French spelling but to apply to it an English pronunciation, and "*Sau-quoit*" prevails.

Platt, L'Hommiedien, Smith and White divided the land between themselves. As Mr. White agreed to be the pioneer and settle on the ground, he was justly favored in the division, both as to choice of location and as to price, and he wisely chose the eastern part, taking in the creek and its valleys and plains on both sides from the Point up to site of New York Mills, and he also purchased other grounds on the west side of his allotment; so that his possessions took in the "Green" where we now stand, and a valuable part of the site of this village and the graceful hills that rise on its borders.

It is now full five score years since Hugh White thus entered

upon his portion of the land. In the following year, 1785, he brought hither all his family and set up his home. The annual spring freshet of 1785 having surrounded the place near the Point, where he landed in 1784, he chose a spot on the plain near where we now are, and put up a temporary dwelling, which afterwards was succeeded by a substantial frame house, sided with boards brought from Schenectady. The soil about the house he cleared of every tree and shrub, except three maple saplings which had grown there from wild seed, and as he afterwards used to say, they were then not bigger than his whip stock. These were left to grow into shade trees. Their irregular positions and unequal distances show they never were planted by the hand of man, but they stand there now in nature's order, three remarkable trees, with an average diameter of three feet. Although a century has made its marks on their trunks and tops, and although they were bored for the sap and yielded sugar in many successive years, and one of them has lost so much timber that it looks now like a crippled giant, trying to stand on his last leg and keep up till the coming of this day's rejoicing, yet they are in full leaf to-day and retain some remnant of the beauty for which thousands have admired them. The old farm house has been transformed, but these three venerable sugar maples stand before us as living witnesses of the olden time. (See note A.)

Hugh White's house on this plain was built on the Connecticut model, which differed widely from that of the Dutch. The Dutch house had a long front, with less depth, a chimney at each end rising above the high gable and a roofed piazza along the front called by them a "stoop"—a word of theirs which has now become American. The Connecticut house had nearly a square form and a large chimney stack in the middle. To this day the former lingers in the lower valley, and some of the latter remain in Whitestown. The two styles distinguishable at a distance, show whether a Dutchman or a Yankee was the builder. The Tory refugees who sailed from New York harbor, in the autumn of 1783, were of both the races; and in the valley of Annapolis, in Nova Scotia, where King George gave them lands for their consolation in adversity, the tourist of to-day may see how the two races followed their respective old usages in the style of their dwellings.

Mr. White and his sons proceeded with diligence to cut away the forest and convert their possessions into farms. The soil was absolutely perfect, yielding crops in quantity and quality far beyond their New England experience.

In later days botanists found that the native flora between the Oriskany and Sadaqueda creeks was remarkably extensive and interesting.

News of White's settlement in this goodly region was not slow in spreading through his native land. Farmers who had worn out plows and hoes among rocks and stones, with scant reward, welcomed the thought of a soil freely worked and yielding better crops. One of the original brown bread eaters of the east inquired, among other things, whether those wondrous lands bore good rye? and White answered, "I don't know: wheat is good enough for me." The war had left the country much wasted in regard to its material condition, but rich in active men, and a flow of emigration soon started hitherward. The only accessible place where good wild land could be found in this State, was west of the German settlements on the Mohawk, and hence this patent was the natural point of pursuit. The Mohawk valley, with its navigable river and its roads, formed the only practicable line of approach, and thus White's settlement was the very key of the position. Hither they came, first from Connecticut, next from all New England, with some from Long Island and New Jersey, followed later by people of the Old World. Soon there were farms, houses, mills, and villages, at attractive points for a hundred miles westward. Later came the era of turnpike roads, which helped much in the teaming over a soft deep soil. The river was used only the more for freighting. The movement went on without check or slackening, and the new country became an established and permanent reality.

The Oneida Indians were a friendly people. They came often to see what was going on in the new settlement and to do a little traffic. Mr. White was always kind and wise in his intercourse with them, and prompt to decide and act. One of their chiefs after a few years' acquaintance craftily put his confidence to a hard test. This chief after some palaver with avowals of his great esteem, asked for a loan of Mr. White's baby granddaughter, promising to bring her back in a few days and in the meantime to take good care of her. "Take her," said White, "I know you will do as you say." The mother's tears and bursting heart resisted in vain. The little one was picked up by the squaws, and soon was out of sight in the woods. There were long hours by day and longer by night while the child's place was empty. But at last the chief proudly came again, with a procession of squaws, bringing the child, well and happy, bound in a frame like a pap-

poose and glittering with Indian finery and trinkets. From that hour Hugh White was worshiped by the Oneidas.

Years afterwards, when Whitesboro was an established and beautiful village, and the Oneidas had withdrawn from its vicinity, there still was to be seen occasionally a tall, slender Indian marching down in the middle of the street, followed by his family in single file, he bearing no load but a long, fresh, spear shaft which he held perpendicularly, his form erect, his step high, his air proud; the women in blankets, bearing on their backs large packs held by bands across their foreheads, walking bent and parrot-toed; the younger ones falling into the file behind. It was charming to look upon such a party on its way to the fishing grounds. But when the expedition had become wearisome and the fishing was over, and the visit to the shore had ended in drunkenness and begging, they slunk back homeward by twilight or through wood paths, straggling and shabby.

Until 1784, the greater part of the State was included in Tryon and Schenectady counties and the Hudson river counties, and Long Island and Staten Island were the exceptions. But there was no actual government or civil organization by towns anywhere west of German Flats. In that year the Legislature changed the name from Tryon to Montgomery county, by a statute passed April 2, 1784, but set up no township government. Thus on the first landing at the Point in June, 1784, this patent was in the county of Montgomery. Four years afterwards the necessity of a regular government for the many and fast growing settlements became apparent. The Legislature by an act passed March 7, 1788, among other things, created the town of Whitestown in the county of Montgomery. This town was laid out on a magnificent scale. Its eastern boundary was a straight line crossing the river a short distance below Genesee street bridge, at a log house then standing there, and running thence due north to the River St. Lawrence, and also due south to a small stream near Pennsylvania and down that stream to the Pennsylvania line. All parts of the State lying west of that line were constituted the town of Whitestown. It contained more than twelve million acres of land, navigable head waters of the Mohawk, the Delaware, the Susquehanna and the Ohio, the salt springs of Onondaga, the chain of little lakes and Oswego river, the entire valley of the Genesee with its upper and lower falls, and also the grand cataract of Niagara. Its frontage on great lakes and rivers was not short of four hundred miles in length.

The map now shown is the ordinary map of the State published the present year, 1884. Red ink has been added to show the bounds of the town in 1788. It goes now into the collection of the Oneida Historical Society. Within the original limits of Whitestown there are now a dozen cities, our own Utica being the eldest and by far the most handsome and attractive; and half as many colleges, our own Hamilton being first and leader; and more than a million of inhabitants and untold wealth.

The original town did not long retain its vast dimensions. In 1789 a slice was cut off at the west end to make the county of Ontario. In 1792 the towns of Steuben, Westmoreland, Paris, Mexico and Peru were set off; but the autonomy of Whitestown, with its town meeting, justices, clerk and elections, never ceased. Utica was set off in 1817, and New Hartford in 1827. The residue remains nearly as it was in 1806, when Peleg Gifford made his survey and published his map.

In 1791 Herkimer county was created. It included nearly the whole of Montgomery county west of Little Falls, and Whites-town was its county seat, in which the first court was held. Ten years afterwards Oneida county was created, taking in the greater part of Herkimer county. In this instance the name for the new county was determined by a little gathering held here. It was a Whitesboro man who proposed to depart from the usual custom and take the name of the Indian tribe, the original people of the region still dwelling around the New England settlements; and thus came the smooth and graceful style of Oneida county. This good example was followed in other cases.

Hugh White, the pioneer, was not a seeker of public position. He once was appointed justice of the peace; and afterwards the governor appointed him one of the judges of the county, and he served several years as such judge, with approbation and honor. Age at length inclined him to retirement and quiet.

The last summons found him at his post. On the 16th day of April, 1812, while those three maple trees were putting forth their buds for the season, Judge White, on his own domain, peacefully yielded up his breath, in the eightieth year of his age. His, venerated widow seventeen years afterwards, at the same season, passed away in the eighty-seventh year of her age.

This village early took the name of Whitesboro. Its broad avenue was made by voluntary cessions, enlarging the width beyond the original four rods of a country road to a full one hundred feet, and was early planted with shade trees on each side.

The first church was reared by "The United Society of Whites-town and Utica," on the site of the present brick church. Although it was a wooden building, it was well designed by a competent amateur architect, divided by columns into nave and aisles, with Roman arches, tall windows, a pulpit with sounding board above, a music loft, a graceful belfry and a bright tinned steeple. The carpenter may have failed in some details, but the result was comely, and for a long period it was an attractive structure. A sweet bell, added in due time, was rung at six o'clock to arouse the sleepers, at noon it called to dinner, and at nine in the evening its tongue spoke to all visiting beaux a hint for parting. The organization was Presbyterian—the settlers thus taking a departure from the Congregationalism of their ancestors.

Some, perhaps many, who in youth heard the gospel in the old church, but afterwards felt the spell of worship in grand cathedrals, still held that handsome wooden church in pleasant memories, and sighed when they learned that it was gone.

The Baptists early had a church, and a strong following and influence for good.

The minister and the schoolmaster early appeared, and exercised benign influences. Yet there came a need for court house and jail. The former displayed the union flag while the court was in session, and the sheriff, wearing a cocked hat and girt with a sword, followed by constables holding aloft their long black rods, marshaled judges, jurors and counsel as they went in procession from their quarters to the temple of justice.

Nor were the lawyers idle. This town furnished to the Court of Errors in 1805, the first chancery case in the State on rights in a stream of water, as affected by occupation and by unwritten agreements between the proprietors of adjacent lands. In 1809 this village gave the Supreme Court its first case in the law of escapes. The jail liberties here, which were free to imprisoned debtors, were so established that a certain sidewalk was within the liberties, but a certain roadway was not. A prisoner, strolling on a winter day, found this sidewalk encumbered with a snow drift, and he stepped out into the roadway and walked there a few rods; and the sheriff being sued for this as an escape, was condemned to pay the creditor the whole amount of the judgment, being over \$5,000. Each of these cases was argued ably by Whites-town counsel, was considered by the courts with care and fully reported. Many authorities were cited, but all were from English authors, or decisions of English courts. Not a New York

nor American case or authority was referred to; and probably because there was none in existence, touching such questions.

This village early had its weekly newspaper, and was a place of much traffic. But the Utica settlement having advantages in position, in that the high ground there reached to the shore of the river and always gave a dry landing place, finally outgrew Whitesboro; and yet for a long time this spot was not without its merchants who sold both at wholesale and retail, and made shipments to New York of potash, otter skins, beaver skins, and other products of the country.

When the time came for emigration to regions west of this State, the best and almost the only line of travel was by the valley of the Mohawk and through Whitestown. Then could be seen passing along this street the emigrant wagon, covered with a high canopy of sail-cloth, carrying wife and little ones, and furniture and food for the journey; the father and boys following behind and driving a few cows and sheep; all slowly making their way, the canvas marked in large capitals "Ohio." In later years the label was "Indiana." This was a frequent and interesting sight, and it is still repeated on some of the plains of the far west, near the Rocky mountains, where the white and spectral canvas, seen from afar, is called "the ship of the prairie."

Things have changed here; but still the best line for passing from the eastern coast of the United States to the western world must be through the valley of the Mohawk, and the plains of old Whitestown, which line divides the Allegany range as does no other between Vermont and Florida. (See note B.) 4

Among the neighbors of Hugh White were many who had served in the Revolutionary war, and some who bore arms in the earlier war between the English and the French. One, at least, was a soldier in a Connecticut regiment of volunteers and fought at Louisburg in 1745,—an extraordinary battle, where the New England troops landed at the shore without artillery, and attacked and carried a strong fort, well supplied with cannon and fully garrisoned; and there was one who helped in the same French wars to make the "Mud bow." Coming up the Mohawk in boats, and finding near Sadequada point a long curve in the river which swept around and made a circle, they stopped an hour or two and dug with their oars across the little neck and let the river tear through the soft earth and make a new channel. Their intention was thus to shorten their voyage a whole mile, for their convenience in case of being driven back by the enemy. This

mile of water was soon separated from the river by the deposits of the stream, and it remained a curved pool with the name of the Mud Bow.

An early emigrant long afterwards narrated how he first arrived here. It was in 1789, and the day of company training; and on this green, where the stumps were then burning, Hugh White was drilling about 27 men simply uniformed and bearing muskets, and his son Daniel C. White, was drilling 17 riflemen, who wore hunting shirts made of tow cloth with a ravelled fringe.

Long afterwards, when an emergency of the war of 1812 required the whole mass of the militia of this region to proceed to the northern frontier, they went forth under a Whitestown general, the strongest company being from this town and mustering nearly 150 men. *The campaign was a weary one. There were long marches in the mud, leaky shelter in camp under constant rains, and not much fighting to be done. The bayonets always think. When the men concluded that they had served long enough, and had done their duty, and it would be of no use to stay any longer, there began a dispersion, some going home singly, and then some in small parties, and in one case a captain deliberately marching off his company in a body. The battalions were depleted; but the Whitestown company held on and finally constituted a majority of the regiment to which it belonged.

The war being ended, the court martial began to deal with the alleged deserters, and for some fifteen months went on with trials, when it was suddenly discovered that there was a fatal defect in the constitution or organization of the tribunal, and the court, not having yet pronounced any judgment, gracefully dissolved, and no officer or man was condemned.

Years after, on a general training day of the 134th regiment held here, at the noon resting time, there was a debate as to the chances of a shower in the afternoon, when some one asked the oracular major for his opinion on that point. Without looking at the clouds he promptly responded with ringing voice: "It never rains anything but blessings on the old hundred and thirty-fourth."✕

Some are here now who remember a day during the war of 1812, when a large body of British troops in red coats were marched as prisoners through this street, on the way to the sea-board for exchange; and also the illumination at the peace of 1815, when the windows of the village glared with lighted candles.

The rule of the road, "Turn out to the right," is as firmly fixed in the popular mind as if it came down with the old common law.

But the regulation in England was, and is, to turn out to the left. In this State there was no old or established law or custom in that regard. The roads were generally narrow and bad, and the behavior of drivers depended mainly on their characters. When the roads along the Mohawk and to the west became much used the trouble of meeting and passing became serious. There arose debates and fights between teamsters. The highway became both a necessity and a terror. Thereupon the legislature in 1801, recognizing that the loads going towards tide water usually were far the heaviest, passed a statute requiring that on the roads leading from Schenectady up the Mohawk and on to Canandaigua, all teams going west should give the road to teams going east. This worked some good, but after a little practice, any teamster who was tugging west with a full lading of imported goods, found it not easy to see the propriety of yielding the whole road when he met a wagon bearing only man, wife and baby, or an empty ox cart. Hence arose collisions, law suits and lasting quarrels. At length the legislature interposed again, and by a general law, passed in 1813, required that on all public roads in every part of the State, when teams met, "each must seasonably turn to the right of the center of the road." Such is the law now, and this sensible rule has spread through the United States. In this instance, the law was actually founded on reason.

In 1802 a clergyman from New England, traveling in this region, sent home his journal. He speaks of passing through this place, and adds: "It would appear to you, my friend, on hearing the relation of events in the western country, that the whole was a fable, and if you were placed in Whitestown," * * * "and saw the progress of improvement, you would believe it enchanted ground." He also wrote: "The original Whitestown appears to be the garden of the world." He also sent home a map of this village, made by himself, on which some buildings now standing may be recognized.

A distinguished emigrant from Long Island, who settled some distance hence, used to say that if ever there was a garden of Eden, it must have been here.

This name of Whitestown clung to the whole region from here to Lake Erie and Ontario for a long time. As late as 1827 a celebrated lecturer on geography used to say that the eastern and southern parts of New York, like his own New England, had a poor soil, except in a few valleys, but that when you came to "the Whitestown country," there was a vast area of greatest fertility.

In sight of the beautiful farms now around us, it is best not to forget the time when the great stumps of the forest held out and were a tiresome disfigurement of the landscape, and it was a rare and pleasing thing to look on a ten acre lot which was perfectly free of them.

They who first broke the forest here were not paupers, but for the most part were men of small means, large courage, industry and hope. The story of many was briefly hinted by one of their natural orators, in the westerly parts of Oneida county, on his addressing a jury of his neighbors, and appealing for their confidence. His defense was opened thus: "Gentlemen of the jury. Twenty-five years ago I came across Fish creek with my axe on my shoulder and forty dollars in my pocket, and went to work in the woods. I have grown with your growth and strengthened with your strength. Now how is it? You know my house and my farm and my stock, and you don't know a man to whom I owe a dollar. I am one of yourselves, and can have no object in deceiving you; and I swear to you, gentlemen, that my client here, Jeemes Smith, is an honest man; and an honest man is the noblest work of God."

Pioneer life did have its hardships, and many a toiling man and woman came to the bent figure and trembling hand of old age before passing threescore years. But their children, born and bred on the spot, were erect and robust.

There were times when meat was lacking. Once, after such a period of want, there came immense numbers of wild pigeons, furnishing both abundance and luxury for several weeks. It was then deemed prudent to preserve pigeons' breasts by packing them in salt, in view to another scarcity. This was done, and when the famine of meat came again, the stock of cured provisions was broached; but it was found that the salt had struck in quite too well; and one who messed with Judge White in those days, afterwards said that in spite of soaking and extra boiling, the article was much more salt than pigeon.

This village on the other hand gave to the country the most beautiful, fragrant and delicious of fall pippins; the widely known Lowell apple. The original seedling tree stood for some seventy years in a garden at this village, and bore fruit in its old age. Its stump remains *in situ* under a beautiful green house, its fitting shelter and monument. The river also contributed an occasional luxury, yielding to fisherman the Mohawk pike, celebrated for its delicious quality.

Among the people here from the first there never was a time when Yale and Harvard were not represented, and every generation has furnished its full quota of professional men as well as farmers, merchants, mechanics, engineers, manufacturers and bankers. DeWitt Clinton, in his "Letters of Hibernicus," said of one of the early settlers from the old world, that he was "the most learned man in America."

In this connection let it not be forgotten that a part of Whitestown, now in New Hartford, was owned jointly by George Washington and George Clinton. One of the deeds, on the sale of part of that property, signed by them both, and acknowledged before James Kent in 1796, is preserved in the collections of the New York Historical Society.

It is not the purpose of this discourse to display the names of those who have held public position and won renown by genius or attainments. This has been done well by others, and can be done again, for the theme is not half exhausted. The transformation of the Whitestown country of 1784 into that of 1884 has been wrought mainly by toil and labor. The forest trees fell before the blows of axes wielded by hard hands. The roads were made, the houses, barns and fences were built, and the fruit trees were planted mostly by a host of plain men, abounding in strength and will. It was a long work and more than one generation shared it. The result is a vast cultivated region full of life's comforts, possessing all the material requirements for education, religion, society, refinement and happiness. Without now listing the fortunate few who received the decorations of distinction, it is fair to think deeply of the rank and file who did the work of these hundred years, and standing near the dust of these true toilers, to feel that the world was not made for Cæsar.

It seems not long ago when the Union demanded soldiers, and young men of this region with rifle in hand followed the flag through march and battle, not loving their lives, even unto death, for the good cause. It was a proud day for the sons of Oneida county, when in 1861 its first quota of volunteers passed through the city of New York, and bearing a flag there presented to them by emigrants from this county, marched to the front; and it was a sad but yet proud day when the fourteenth regiment passed the same place again on its return from many battles, bearing the same flag, the ranks thinned by losses, but covered with honor.

The dead of that mortal struggle for national existence, popular government and liberty, piously brought home and laid in the



earth by the side of their fathers, gave to every burying ground in the land a new and holy consecration.

There is no prophet now who can lift up his voice and tell what will be here when another century has passed and we all have turned to dust: no seer whose eyes can pierce through the long vista and descry the scenes beyond.

May the Mighty and Loving Father who made this land of fertility and abundance, and in the fullness of time called our progenitors into its possession, abide with their descendants and successors to all generations.

NOTE A.—The appropriate inscription placed on Judge White's monument about sixty years ago was drawn up by a young man. In his draft there was a glowing passage about "making the desert to blossom as the rose," but his senior, who had been here from the early days, struck out that passage as smacking of fiction, and remarked, "the Judge would not allow so much as a rosebush about his house." The three sugar maple trees were the only exception to the destruction he waged upon all wild growth of tree or bush. Nor was this strange. The necessary fight against forest and thicket inspired a hostile sentiment which made it a joy to wield the axe against the common enemy. Those who tried to save here and there a grand old tree, for its beauty or its useful shadow, usually were disappointed. The shallow roots of a tree full grown in the dense woods proved insufficient to sustain it when standing alone, deprived of the clinging net work of forest roots, and exposed to the winds which swept across the open clearing. Young trees, left or planted in open fields, and there passing their youth, adapted themselves to circumstances, and with grappings deeper sunk in the earth and forms less lofty and more robust, braved the storm and flourished. Much of the ornamentation of the country was due to rude and unsightly fences, in the corners of which a young tree might escape the plow and the scythe, and on many an old farm we now can trace by a few surviving trees the line of a former log or worm fence, which rotted away long ago, leaving no trace, and better farming gave it no successor, but abandoned the line and united the fields. The landscape is thus beautified by chance, and its beauty not only excites the pride of owners, but improves the taste of the people.

NOTE B.—The Alleghenies form a continuous mountain chain, bounding on the west the whole Atlantic slope, except the one opening through by the Hudson and the Mohawk. The valleys of these two streams form a notch or clove reaching from the ocean level to the western slope, always affording a continuous water passage, the usefulness of which led to the great enterprise of building the Erie Canal. Everywhere else the valleys of rivers, when followed up, were found to end beneath high mountain land. All plans and efforts for canalling through to the west, by the river lines of Pennsylvania and of Virginia, and further south, totally failed. Nature had given to New York alone the power to open the west. In later days the railroads have climbed over or pierced through the high divide; but the line of the Hudson and the Mohawk must forever be easier of grade and more available than any other for railroad operations.



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